

# **EXHIBIT A**

## **ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
VPS COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

I.

NAME

The name of the Corporation is VPS Communications, Inc.  
(the "Corporation").

II.

PURPOSE

The Corporation shall be a public service company within the meaning of Section 13.1-620 of the Virginia Stock Corporation Act (the "Act"). The purpose for which the Corporation is organized is to acquire, own, hold, maintain, manage, operate, improve, develop, finance, pledge, encumber, mortgage, sell, exchange, lease, dispose of and otherwise deal with any property used or usable in connection with the provision by the Company of interstate and intrastate telecommunications services, together with such other activities as may be necessary, advisable, related to or incidental in connection therewith. The Corporation may also engage in any other lawful business not required by the Act to be specifically stated in the Articles of Incorporation.

## III.

AUTHORIZED SHARES

The number of shares which the Corporation shall have authority to issue shall be 1,000 shares of Common Stock, no par value. No holder of shares of any class of the Corporation shall have any preemptive or preferential right to purchase or subscribe to (i) any shares of any class of the Corporation, whether now or hereafter authorized; (ii) any warrants, rights, or options to purchase any such shares; or (iii) any securities or obligations convertible into any such shares or into warrants, rights, or options to purchase any such shares.

## IV.

REGISTERED AGENT

The initial registered office shall be located at One James River Plaza, 7th and Cary Streets, Richmond, Virginia 23219, and the initial registered agent shall be J. Kennerly Davis, Jr., who is a resident of Virginia and a director of the Corporation, and whose business address is the same as the address of the initial registered office.

## V.

DIRECTORS

The number of Directors constituting the initial Board of Directors shall be five (5), and the names and addresses of

the persons who are to serve as the initial Directors are as follows:

Edgar M. Roach, Jr.  
One James River Plaza  
7th & Cary Streets  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Robert E. Rigsby  
One James River Plaza  
7th & Cary Streets  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

J. Kennerly Davis, Jr.  
One James River Plaza  
7th & Cary Streets  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

William S. Mistr  
One James River Plaza  
7th & Cary Streets  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Lawrence E. DeSimone  
One James River Plaza  
7th & Cary Streets  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

#### VI.

#### LIMIT ON LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

(1) Definitions. In this Article:

"applicant" means the person seeking indemnification pursuant to this Article.

"expenses" includes counsel fees.

"liability" means the obligation to pay a judgment, settlement, penalty, fine, including any excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan, or reasonable expenses incurred with respect to a proceeding.

"party" includes an individual who was, is, or is threatened to be made a named defendant or respondent in a proceeding.

"proceeding" means any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative and whether formal or informal.

(2) Limitation on Liability. In any proceeding brought by or in the right of the Corporation or brought by or on behalf of shareholders of the Corporation, no director or officer of the Corporation shall be liable to the Corporation or its shareholders for monetary damages with respect to any transaction, occurrence or course of conduct, whether prior or subsequent to the effective date of this Article, except for liability resulting from such person's having engaged in willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law or any federal or state securities law.

(3) Mandatory Indemnification. The Corporation shall indemnify (i) any person who was or is a party to any proceeding, including a proceeding brought by a shareholder in the right of the Corporation or brought by or on behalf of shareholders of the Corporation, by reason of the fact that he is or was a director or officer of the Corporation, or (ii) any director or officer who is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, trustee, partner or officer of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise, against any liability incurred by him in connection

with such proceeding unless he engaged in willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law. A person is considered to be serving an employee benefit plan at the Corporation's request if his duties to the Corporation also impose duties on, or otherwise involve services by, him to the plan or to participants in or beneficiaries of the plan. The Board of Directors is hereby empowered, by a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested directors, to enter into a contract to indemnify any director or officer in respect of any proceedings arising from any act or omission, whether occurring before or after the execution of such contract.

(4) Effectiveness; Amendments. The provisions of this Article shall be applicable to all proceedings commenced after the adoption hereof by the shareholders of the Corporation, arising from any act or omission, whether occurring before or after such adoption. No amendment or repeal of this Article shall have any effect on the rights provided under this Article with respect to any act or omission occurring prior to such amendment or repeal. The Corporation shall promptly take all such actions, and make all such determinations, as shall be necessary or appropriate to comply with its obligation to make any indemnity under this Article and shall promptly pay or reimburse all reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees, incurred by any such director or officer in connection with such actions and determinations or proceedings of any kind arising therefrom.

(5) Effect of Judgment. The termination of any proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not of itself create a presumption that the applicant did not meet the standard of conduct described in Section (2) or (3) of this Article.

(6) Standard of Conduct. Any indemnification under section (3) of this Article (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the Corporation only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the applicant is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in section (3).

The determination shall be made:

(a) By the Board of Directors by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of directors not at the time parties to the proceeding;

(b) If a quorum cannot be obtained under subsection (a) of this section, by majority vote of a committee duly designated by the Board of Directors (in which designation directors who are parties may participate), consisting solely of two or more directors not at the time parties to the proceeding;

(c) By special legal counsel:

(i) Selected by the Board of Directors or its committee in the manner prescribed in subsection (a) or (b) of this section; or

(ii) If a quorum of the Board of Directors cannot be obtained under subsection (a) of this

section and a committee cannot be designated under subsection (b) of this section, selected by majority vote of the full Board of Directors, in which selection directors who are parties may participate; or

(d) By the shareholders, but shares owned by or voted under the control of directors who are at the time parties to the proceeding may not be voted on the determination.

Any evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses shall be made in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is appropriate, except that if the determination is made by special legal counsel, such evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses shall be made by those entitled under subsection (c) of this section (6) to select counsel.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event there has been a change in the composition of a majority of the Board of Directors after the date of the alleged act or omission with respect to which indemnification is claimed, any determination as to indemnification and advancement of expenses with respect to any claim for indemnification made pursuant to this Article shall be made by special legal counsel agreed upon by the Board of Directors and the applicant. If the Board of Directors and the applicant are unable to agree upon such special legal counsel the Board of Directors and the applicant each shall select a nominee, and the nominees shall select such special legal counsel.



(7) Reimbursement of Expenses. (a) The Corporation may pay for or reimburse the reasonable expenses incurred by any applicant who is a party to a proceeding in advance of final disposition of the proceeding or the making of any determination under section (6) if the applicant furnishes the Corporation:

- (i) a written statement of his good faith belief that he has met the standard of conduct described in section (3); and
- (ii) a written undertaking, executed personally or on his behalf, to repay the advance if it is ultimately determined that he did not meet such standard of conduct.

(b) The undertaking required by paragraph (ii) of subsection (a) of this section shall be an unlimited general obligation of the applicant but need not be secured and may be accepted without reference to financial ability to make repayment.

(c) Authorizations of payments under this section shall be made by the persons specified in section (6).

(8) Additional Powers. The Board of Directors is hereby empowered, by majority vote of a quorum consisting of disinterested Directors, to cause the Corporation to indemnify or contract to indemnify any person not specified in section (2) or (3) of this Article who was, is or may become a party to any proceeding, by reason of the fact that he is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request

of the Corporation as director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise, to the same extent as if such person were specified as one to whom indemnification is granted in section (3). The provisions of sections (4) through (7) of this Article shall be applicable to any indemnification provided hereafter pursuant to this section (8).


(9) Insurance. The Corporation may purchase and maintain insurance to indemnify it against the whole or any portion of the liability assumed by it in accordance with this Article and may also procure insurance, in such amounts as the Board of Directors may determine, on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise, against any liability asserted against or incurred by him in any such capacity or arising from his status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have power to indemnify him against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

(10) Non-Exclusivity. Every reference herein to directors, officers, employees or agents shall include former directors, officers, employees and agents and their respective heirs, executors and administrators. The indemnification hereby provided and provided hereafter pursuant to the power hereby conferred by this Article on the Board of Directors shall not be

exclusive of any other rights to which any person may be entitled, including any right under policies of insurance that may be purchased and maintained by the Corporation or others, with respect to claims, issues or matters in relation to which the Corporation would not have the power to indemnify such person under the provisions of this Article. Such rights shall not prevent or restrict the power of the Corporation to make or provide for any further indemnity, or provisions for determining entitlement to indemnity, pursuant to one or more indemnification agreements, bylaws, or other arrangements (including, without limitation, creation of trust funds or security interests funded by letters of credit or other means) approved by the Board of Directors (whether or not any of the directors of the Corporation shall be a party to or beneficiary of any such agreements, bylaws or arrangements); provided, however, that any provision of such agreements, bylaws or other arrangements shall not be effective if and to the extent that it is determined to be contrary to this Article or applicable laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

(11) Severability. Each provision of this Article shall be severable, and an adverse determination as to any such provision shall in no way affect the validity of any other provision.

Dated: April 11, 1997

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
W. Hildebrandt Burgner, Jr.  
Incorporator

**COPY****Commonwealth of Virginia**

TRACKING NUMBER

OT-1200-0002

**STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION***Richmond,*

April 14, 1997

*This is to Certify that the certificate of incorporation of,*

VPS Communications, Inc.

*was this day issued and admitted to record in this office  
and that the said corporation is authorized to transact its business  
subject to all Virginia laws applicable to the corporation and its  
business. Effective date:*

April 14, 1997

*State Corporation Commission**William J. Bridge**Clerk of the Commission*

SCC710  
(01/00)

## ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT OF

VPS Communications, Inc.

### ONE

The name of the corporation is VPS Communications, Inc. (the Corporation).

### TWO

Article I of the Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation shall be amended as follows:

#### NAME

The name of the Corporation is Dominion Telecom, Inc. (the "Corporation").

### THREE

The foregoing amendment was adopted on August 1, 2000.

### FOUR

The amendment was adopted by unanimous consent of the shareholders.

The undersigned Vice President and Corporate Secretary declares that the facts herein stated are true as of the 1<sup>st</sup> day of August 2000.

VPS Communications, Inc.

By:



P. A. Wilkerson

Vice President and Corporate Secretary

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION**

August 2, 2000

The State Corporation Commission has found the accompanying articles submitted on behalf of Dominion Telecom, Inc. (formerly VPS COMMUNICATIONS, INC. ) to comply with the requirements of law, and confirms payment of all related fees.

Therefore, it is ORDERED that this

**CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT**

be issued and admitted to record with the articles of amendment in the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, effective August 2, 2000, at 08:53 AM.

The corporation is granted the authority conferred on it by law in accordance with the articles, subject to the conditions and restrictions imposed by law.

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

By



Commissioner

00-08-02-0529  
AMENACPT  
CIS0352